token guard around the palace, using service companies from military schools and some squadrons from cavalry or Cossack regiments. But this would indicate our distrust of the infantry regiments that represented the bulk of the garrison and might provoke a violent clash between our guard and the outfits coming to the palace to demonstrate against us. We therefore decided to call infantry soldiers first. If we had three or four infantry companies as a façade, we could use other units to reinforce them.

We began a roll call of the barracks, asking each regiment whether it supported the rioters or the All-Russian Executive Committee and whether it was ready to help defend the Tauride Palace. Some regimental committees replied that the regiment was neutral. Others told us they were taking orders from the Communist party as the sole true defender of the revolution. None would actively defend us. Only a few promised to send a service platoon to guard the palace . . . if other regiments also sent such platoons. By morning the forces at the disposal of the palace commandant had dwindled to an incomplete service company of the Pavlovsky Regiment and a few men from other units. Still, we tried to keep guards at the entrance of Katherine Hall and at large French windows along the façade, to make it appear as if the palace were defended by armed forces.

All the news from other parts of the city was bad. During the night meetings had been held in factories; arms had been brought in by the carload; shock commandos had been formed. In the morning armed demonstrations were resumed in the streets. Crowds roamed the city, firing and looting shops. The Communists brought reinforcements from outside. Battleships were called from Kronstadt. The First Riflemen's reserve regiment was marching from Oranienbaum; the Second was taking up arms in Peterhof.

We expected an onslaught on the Tauride Palace at any moment but continued to negotiate with the barracks by telephone. A few regiments that had sided with the Bolsheviks now announced they would remain neutral after all. Apparently they had changed their minds because of the looting and murder during Communist parades. A few Cossack regiments called the Tauride Palace to tell us they would help the Executive Committee to restore order in the streets if they were supported by infantry. Unfortunately, we had no infantry. A decade later Miliukov remarked pointedly in his *History:* "It seemed that the Provisional Government was forgotten. . . . the real center of the struggle was the Tauride Palace." This was true, with one reservation: There was no real struggle around the Tauride Palace either, only a war of nerves with overwhelming forces on the one side and, on the other, a handful of practically defenseless men who refused to yield.